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VERSES
ON THE
DEATH
OF
Doctor *SWIFT*.

Written by Himſelf: Nov. 1731.

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VERSES

On the DEATH of

Dr. *SWIFT.*

Occaſioned by reading the following Maxim in ROCHFOUCAULT.

Dans l'adverſité de nos meilleurs amis nous trouvons toujours quelque choſe, qui ne nous deplaiſt pas.

AS *Rochfoucault* his Maxims drew
From Nature, I believe 'em true:
They argue no corrupted Mind
In him; the Fault is in Mankind.
This Maxim more than all the reſt
Is thought too baſe for human Breaſt;
" In all Diſtreſſes of our Friends
" We firſt conſult our private Ends;
" While Nature, kindly bent to eaſe us,
" Points out ſome Circumſtance to pleaſe us."

If this perhaps your Patience move;
Let Reaſon and Experience prove.
We all behold with envious Eyes
Our Equal rais'd above our Size.
I love my Friend as well as you:
But why ſhou'd he obſtruct my view?
Then, let me have the higher Poſt;
Suppoſe it but an Inch at moſt.
If in a Battle you ſhould find
One, whom you love of all Mankind,
Had ſome heroick Action done,
A Champion kill'd, or Trophy won;
Rather than thus be overtopt,
Wou'd you not wiſh his Lawrels cropt?
Dear honeſt Ned is in the Gout,
Lies rack'd with Pain, and you without:
How patiently you hear him groan!
How glad, the Caſe is not your own!
What Poet would not mourn to ſee
His Brother write as well as he?

But rather than they ſhould excel,
He'd wiſh his Rivals all in Hell.
Her End when Emulation miſſes,
She turns to Envy, Stings and Hiſſes:
The ſtrongeſt Friendſhip yields to Pride,
Unleſs the Odds be on our ſide.
Vain human Kind! fantaſtick Race!
Thy various Follies who can trace?
Self-love, Ambition, Envy, Pride,
Their Empire in our Hearts divide.
Give others Riches, Power, and Station;
'Tis all on me an Uſurpation.
I have no Title to aſpire;
Yet, when you ſink, I ſeem the higher.
In *Pope* I cannot read a Line,
But with a Sigh I wiſh it mine:
When He can in one Couplet fix
More Senſe, than I can do in ſix,
It gives me ſuch a jealous Fit;
I cry, Pox take him and his Wit.

I grieve

I grieve to be outdone by *Gay*
In my own humorous biting way.
Arbuthnot is no more my Friend,
Who dares to Irony pretend;
Which I was born to introduce;
Refin'd it firſt, and ſhew'd its Uſe.
St. *John*, as well as *Pultney*, knows
That I had ſome Repute for Proſe;
And, till they drove me out of Date,
Could maul a Miniſter of State.
If they have mortify'd my Pride,
And made me throw my Pen aſide;
If with ſuch Talents Heaven hath bleſt 'em,
Have I not reaſon to deteſt 'em?
To all my Foes dear Fortune ſend
Thy Gifts, but never to my Friend:
I tamely can endure the firſt;
But this with Envy makes me burſt.
Thus much may ſerve by way of Proem;
Proceed we therefore to our Poem,

The Time is not remote, when I
Muſt by the Courſe of Nature dye;
When I foreſee, my ſpecial Friends
Will try to find their private Ends.
And tho' 'tis hardly underſtood,
Which way my Death can do them good;
Yet thus, methinks, I hear them ſpeak:
See, how the Dean begins to break!
Poor Gentleman! he droops apace;
You plainly find it in his Face.
That old Vertigo in his Head
Will never leave him, till he's dead.
Beſides, his Memory decays:
He recollects not what he ſays:
He cannot call his Friends to mind;
Forgets the place where laſt he din'd:
Plies you with Stories o'er and o'er;
He told 'em fifty times before.
How does he fancy, we can ſit
To hear his out-of-faſhion Wit?

But he takes up with younger Folks,
Who, for his Wine, will bear his Jokes.
Faith, he muſt make his Stories ſhorter,
Or change his Comrades once a Quarter:
In half the time, he talks them round:
There muſt another Sett be found.

For Poetry, he's paſt his Prime;
He takes an Hour to find a Rhime:
His Fire is out, his Wit decay'd,
His Fancy ſunk, his Muſe a Jade.
I'd have him throw away his Pen;
But there's no talking to ſome Men.

And then, their Tenderneſs appears,
By adding largely to my Years:
He's older than he would be reckon'd,
And well remembers *Charles* the Second.
He hardly drinks a Pint of Wine;
And that, I doubt, is no good Sign.
His Stomach too begins to fail:
Laſt Year we thought him ſtrong and hale;

But now he's quite another thing;
I wiſh he may hold out till Spring.
Then hug themſelves, and reaſon thus;
It is not yet ſo bad with us.
In ſuch a caſe they talk in Tropes,
And, by their Fears, expreſs their Hopes,
Some great Misfortune to portend,
No Enemy can match a Friend.
With all the Kindneſs they profeſs
The Merit of a lucky Gueſs
(When daily Howd'y's come of Courſe,
And Servants anſwer, " worſe and worſe!)"
Wou'd pleaſe 'em better, than to tell,
That, God be prais'd, the Dean is well.
Then he, who propheſy'd the beſt,
Approves his Judgment to the reſt:
" You know, I always fear'd the worſt,
" And often told you ſo at firſt."
He'd rather chooſe that I ſhould dye,
Than his Prediction prove a Lye:

Not one foretels, I ſhall recover;
But all agree to give me over.
Yet ſhould ſome Neighbour feel a Pain
Juſt in the Parts where I complain;
How many a Meſſage would he ſend?
What hearty Prayers, that I ſhould mend?
Enquire, what Regimen I kept;
What gave me Eaſe, and how I ſlept:
And more lament, when I was dead,
Than all the Snivelers round my Bed.
My good Companions, never fear;
For, though you may miſtake a Year,
Though your Prognoſticks run too faſt,
They muſt be verify'd at laſt.
Behold the fatal Day arrive!
How is the Dean? He's juſt alive.
Now the departing Prayer is read:
He hardly breathes. The Dean is dead.
Before the Paſſing Bell begun,
The News thro' half the Town has run.

Oh!

Oh! may we all for Death prepare!
What has he left? And who's his Heir?
I know no more, than what the News is;
'Tis all bequeath'd to publick Uſes.
'To publick Uſes! there's a Whim!
What had the Publick done for him?
Meer Envy, Avarice, and Pride:
He gave it all—but firſt he dy'd.
And had the Dean in all the Nation
No worthy Friend? No poor Relation?
So ready to do Strangers Good,
Forgetting his own Fleſh and Blood?
Now Grubſtreet Wits are all employ'd;
With Elegies the Town is cloy'd:
Some Paragraph in every Paper
To *curſe* the *Dean*, or *bleſs* the *Drapier*.
The Doctors, tender of their Fame,
Wiſely on me lay all the Blame.
We muſt confeſs his Caſe was nice;
But he would never take Advice.

Had he been rul'd, for ought appears,
He might have liv'd theſe twenty Years:
For, when we open'd him, we found,
That all his vital Parts were ſound.

From *Dublin* ſoon to *London* ſpread,
'Tis told at Court, the Dean is dead.
And Lady *S*---- in the Spleen
Runs laughing up to tell ***.
** ſo gracious, mild and good,
Cries, " Is he gone! 'tis time he ſhou'd.
" * * * *
" * * * *
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Now *Chartres*, at -------- Levee,
Tells with a Sneer the Tidings heavy:
Why, if he died without his Shoes,
(Cries ------) I'm ſorry for the News:

Oh,

Oh, were the Wretch but living ſtill,
And in his place my good Friend *Will!*
Or had a Mitre on his Head,
Provided *Bolingbroke* were dead!
Now *Curl* his Shop from Rubbiſh drains:
Three genuine Tomes of *Swift's* remains!
And then to make them paſs the glibber,
Reviſ'd by *Tibbalds*, *Moore* and *Cibber*;
He'll treat me, as he does my Betters,
Publiſh my Will, my Life, my Letters;
Revive the Libels born to die;
Which *Pope* muſt bear as well as I.
Here ſhift the Scene, to repreſent
How thoſe I love my Death lament.
Poor *Pope* will grieve a Month, and *Gay*
A Week, and *Arbuthnot* a Day.
St. *John* himſelf will ſcarce forbear
To bite his Pen, and drop a Tear.
The reſt will give a Shrug, and Cry,
"I'm ſorry, but we all muſt die!

Indiffe-

Indifference clad in Wiſdom's Guiſe
All Fortitude of Mind ſupplies:
For how can ſtony Bowels melt,
In thoſe, who never Pity felt;
When we are laſht, they kiſs the Rod,
Reſigning to the Will of God.

The Fools, my Juniors by a Year,
Are tortur'd with Suſpence and Fear;
Who wiſely thought my Age a Screen,
When Death approacht, to ſtand between;
The Screen remov'd, their Hearts are trembling;
They mourn for me without diſſembling.

My female Friends, whoſe tender Hearts
Have better learn'd to act their Parts,
Receive the News in doleful Dumps:
"The Dean is dead (pray what is Trumps?)
"Then, Lord, have Mercy on his Soul.
"(Ladies, I'll venture for the Vole.)
"Six Deans, they ſay, muſt bear the Pall,
"(I wiſh I knew what King to call.)

"Madam,

" Madam, your Husband will attend
" The Fun'ral of ſo good a Friend:
" No, Madam, 'tis a ſhocking Sight,
" And he's engag'd to morrow Night:
" My Lady Club wou'd take it ill,
" If he ſhould fail her at Quadrill.
" He lov'd the Dean (I lead a Heart)
" But deareſt Friends, they ſay, muſt part.
" His Time was come, he ran his Race;
" We hope he's in a better Place.

Why do we grieve that Friends ſhould dye?
No Loſs more eaſy to ſupply.
One Year is paſt; a different Scene!
No further mention of the Dean:
Who now, alas, no more is miſt,
Than if he never did exiſt.
Where's now the Favourite of *Appollo?*
Departed: ---- *And his Works muſt follow:*
Muſt undergo the common Fate,
His kind of Wit is out of Date.

Some

Some Country Squire to *Lintot* goes,
Enquires for *Swift* in Verſe and Proſe.
Says *Lintot*, " I have heard the Name;
" He dy'd a Year ago. The ſame."
He ſearches all the Shop in vain.
" Sir, you may find them in *Duck Lane*.
" I ſent them, with a Load of Books,
" Laſt Monday to the Paſtry Cooks.
" To fancy, they could live a Year!
" I find, you're but a Stranger here.
" The Dean was famous in his Time,
" And had a kind of Knack at Rhime.
" His way of Writing now is paſt:
" The Town has got a better Taſte.
" I keep no antiquated Stuff,
" But Spick and Span I have enough.
" Pray, do but give me Leave to ſhew 'em:
" Here's *Colley Cibber*'s Birth-day Poem.
" This Ode you never yet have ſeen
" By *Stephen Duck* upon the Queen.

" Then,

" Then, here's a Letter finely pen'd
" Againſt the Craftsman and his Friend:
" It clearly ſhews, that all Reflection
" On Miniſters is Diſ-affection.
" Next, here's Sir *Robert*'s Vindication,
" And Mr. *Henley*'s laſt Oration.
" The Hawkers have not got 'em yet:
" Your honour pleaſe to buy a Sett?
Suppoſe me dead; and then ſuppoſe
A Club aſſembled at the Roſe:
Where, from diſcourſe of this and that,
I grow the Subject of their Chat:
The Dean, if we believe report,
Was never ill receiv'd at Court.
Altho' ironically grave,
He ſham'd the Fool, and laſh'd the Knave.
" Sir, I have heard another Story;
" He was a moſt confounded Tory;
" And grew, or he is much bely'd,
" Extremely dull, before he dy'd.

Can we the *Drapier* e'er forget?
Is not our *Nation* in his Debt?
'Twas he that writ the *Drapier's Letters* ---!
" He ſhou'd have left them for his *Betters*:
" We had a hundred *abler Men*,
" Nor need *depend* upon his *Pen* ---.
" Say what you will about his *reading*,
" You never can *defend* his *Breeding*:
" Who, in his *Satyrs* running riot,
" Cou'd never leave the *World* in *quiet* ---;
" Attacking, when he took the *Whim*,
" *Court*, *City*, *Camp*; all one to him---.
" But, why wou'd he, except he *ſlobber'd*,
" Offend our *Patriot*, Great Sir *R*--?
" Whoſe *Councils* aid the Sov'reign Pow'r,
" To *ſave* the *Nation* ev'ry hour.
" What *Scenes* of Evil he unravels,
" In *Satyrs*, *Libels*, *Lying Travels*!
" Not ſparing his own *Clergy-Cloth*,
" But, *eats* into it, like a *Moth* ---!

Perhaps

Perhaps I may allow, the Dean
Had too much Satyr in his Vein;
And ſeem'd determin'd not to ſtarve it,
Becauſe no Age could more deſerve it.
Vice, if it e'er can be abaſh'd,
Muſt be or *Ridicul'd*, or *Laſh'd*.
If you *reſent* it, who's to blame?
He neither knew *you*, nor your *Name*.
Should Vice expect to ſcape Rebuke,
Becauſe its Owner is a Duke?
His Friendſhips, ſtill to few confin'd,
Were always of the midling Kind;
No Fools of Rank, or Mongrel Breed,
Who fain wou'd paſs for Lords indeed;
Where Titles give no Right or Power,
And Peerage is a wither'd Flower.
He wou'd have deem'd it a Diſgrace,
If ſuch a Wretch had known his Face.
He never thought an Honour done him,
Becauſe a Peer was proud to own him:

Wou'd rather ſlip aſide, and chooſe
To talk with Wits in dirty Shoes;
And ſcorn the Tools, with Stars and Garters,
So often ſeen careſſing *Chartres*.

He kept with Princes due Decorum;
Yet never ſtood in Awe before 'em.
He follow'd *David*'s Leſſon juſt;
In Princes never put his Truſt:
And, would you make him truly ſower,
Provoke him with a Slave in Power.

" Alas, poor *Dean!* his only Scope
" Was, to be held a *Miſanthrope*.
" This into gen'ral *Odium* drew him,
" Which if he lik'd, *much good may do him*:
" His *Zeal* was not to laſh our *Crimes*,
" But, *Diſcontent* againſt the Times;
" For, had we made him *timely* Offers,
" To *raiſe* his *Poſt*, or *fill* his *Coffers*,
" Perhaps he might have truckled down,
" Like other *Brethren* of his *Gown*.

" For

" For *Party* he would ſcarce have bled——:
" I ſay no more——, becauſe he's *dead*——.
" What *Writings* has he left behind——?
I hear, they're of a diff'rent kind:
A few, in *Verſe*; but moſt, in Proſe——.
" Some *high-flown Pamphlets*, I ſuppoſe——:
" All ſcribbled in the *worſt* of *Times*,
" To *palliate* his Friend *Oxford*'s Crimes,
" To praiſe Queen *Anne*, nay more, defend her,
" As never fav'ring the *Pretender*——:
" Or *Libels* yet conceal'd from Sight,
" Againſt the *Court* to ſhew his *Spight*.
" Perhaps, his *Travels*, *Part the Third*;
" A *Lye*, at ev'ry *ſecond* Word:
" Offenſive to a *Loyal* Ear ——:
" But—— *not one Sermon*, you may *ſwear*——
As for his Works, in Verſe or Proſe,
I own my ſelf no Judge of thoſe.
Nor can I tell what Criticks thought 'em;
But this I know, all People bought 'em;

As with a moral View design'd,
To *please*, and to *reform* Mankind;
And, if he often miss'd his Aim,
The *World* must own it, to their *Shame*;
The *Praise* is *His*, and *Theirs* the *Blame*.
He gave the little Wealth he had,
To build a House for Fools and Mad;
To shew, by one Satyric Touch,
No Nation wanted it so much.
And since you dread no farther Lashes,
Methinks you may forgive his Ashes.

F I N I S.